



Hitch Your Wagon to a Star!

s many of you are probably aware, Louisville is increasingly being recognized as a top city in a number of areas. Check out the link www.

louisvilleky.gov/Mayor/IWantTo/rankings.htm to see just how the city stacks up in the U.S. in a number of categories from "Best Cities for Families" and "Best Places to Live" to "Economic Growth Potential" and "Small Cities of the Future". Rankings like that don't just happen overnight, but result from steady and sustained effort to build a vibrant and sustainable community and by thinking boldly.

Our goal at the Forest is not simply to be the biggest, but also to strive to be the best: to offer the best hiking, the best camping, the best nature-based education, and of course, the ecological stewardship. But more than that, our goal is that the Forest and the system of natural areas we manage contribute to making Louisville the best it can be. Towards that end, we have been working with the leadership of Riverside, Farnsley-Moreman and

leadership of Riverside, Farnsley-Moreman and other attractions in south and southwest Louisville to draw attention to the potential of this area as a destination for tourism around the fantastic and unrivaled cultural and natural attractions in the area.

For the uninitiated, we point out that the south and southwest area contain three of Louisville's five physiographic regions (the knobs, the Ohio River Valley, and the shale lowlands) and the area possesses over 10,000 acres of publiclyowned green space offering a wide range of recreational activities. It is also home to the Iroquois Amphitheater, Riverside, Riverview Park, the Little Loomhouse, fantastic golf courses, not to mention the Louisville Loop. Dig into the rankings listed above and in many cases, you'll find that these types of amenities often are cited as a critical part of the foundation for livability and attracting positive community growth.

Towards the goal of promoting the area as a destination for tourism, Metro Parks, in partnership with the Southwest Dream Team (swdreamteam. org) and with funding support from the Centers for Disease Control and Metro Council, is working to implement a number of related projects. One is to

develop a tourism way-finding program so that local residents and visitors may more easily navigate to the areas' main attractions. The first phase of this project is now complete with signage installed along major connecting corridors in the community and development of an umbrella brand for the area's attractions: the "South Points Scenic Gateway". Voting was recently conducted on the SW Dream Team's website to select a logo design for the brand that will ultimately be used on marketing materials to promote the area. The second phase will involve an application to the State Transportation Cabinet for proposed "South Points Scenic Gateway" signage along I-65 and I264 to allow regional and out-of -town tourists make their way.

How is this important to the Forest? Well, as the south and southwestern areas of the community grow in ways that honor and support its cultural, historical, and natural legacy, so will the condition of the Forest benefit as a growing base of Forest visitors help us place greater emphasis on protecting those things which help sustain the community. So we look forward to being able to continue to make the Forest one of the best places for outdoor recreation and to continually improve its ecological health as more residents of the community come to use and appreciate this wonderful resource.

Bennett Knox, Parks Administrator





Volunteer News

Thanks and Mentions

Eagle Scouts

Charles Shanahan and his fellow scouts in Troop 25 rebuilt a feeding station table for the Environmental Education Center and relocated a sand tracking pit used in educational classes. This troop donated 112.5 service hours to this project which benefits the many schoolchildren who visit our area.

Adam Hemmelgarn and Troop 366 donated 192 hours to clear invasive plant species at Caperton Swamp. The efforts of Adam and his group will improve habitat for native wetland birds and other wildlife, furthering the ongoing restoration of this park.

Matthew Auclair and Troop 191 refurbished our outdoor turtle enclosure using recycled composite wood, assuring a long life for our native turtle habitat. This group did fundraising for the materials, deconstructed the existing enclosure and built the new one, for a total of 154 service hours.

Project Groups

On February 18, Waverly Park benefited from a visit by Students Today, Leaders Forever (STLF) from Western Illinois University. This group of seven college students served as mentors to 33 high school students on an alternative spring break. During their visit to Waverly, they donated 107.5 hours of service doing trail work, disassembling an old wooden bridge and litter removal.

Volunteer Appreciation Bruncha Huge Hit!

On Saturday, January 28, 2012, 65 people gathered to honor the outstanding volunteers who give so much of themselves to the Metro Parks' Natural Areas Division.

Many Natural Areas volunteers work behind the scenes, clearing land of invasive plant species in Clifton Heights, Beargrass Creek and Caperton Swamp; others blaze and maintain trail in Waverly Park and Jefferson Memorial Forest or perform litter patrols to keep our parks not only safe, but beautiful. Others are more visible, working in the Welcome Center greeting guests and answering questions, or leading public programs and teaching schoolchildren during their visits to the Forest. Whatever the task, these volunteers step up to the plate with eagerness in their eyes and passion in their hearts.

As a group, these remarkable individuals donated a total of 5,305 hours of service - equivalent to 2.5 full time employees - in 2011. Surely that was worth a party in their honor! The true value of such selfless dedication and passion is priceless. Nevertheless, the value assigned is the current national average value of the volunteer hour, for a whopping \$113,314.80! We truly could not function without these dedicated volunteers and their amazing generosity.

> Mayor Greg Fischer was so impressed with the accomplishments of our volunteers that he made a guest appearance to express his appreciation and admiration for the work they do and the inspiration they provide to others. Attendees were treated to Natural Areas updates from Bennett Knox, Parks Administrator, words of encouragement and thanks from Councilwoman Vicki

Welch and enjoyed brunch donated by Dairy Queen, Shack in the Back, Pic Pac and Heine Brothers Coffee.

The morning culminated in an award ceremony for service hour milestones accomplished in 2011. Congrats to the

Bright, Tony • 100 Carter, James • 50 Collings, Jim • 100 Davis, Billy • 100 DeGeorge, Josh • 50 Dobson, Dan • 50 Freeman, Steve • Frey, Beth • 100 Gardner, Paul • 50 Garvey, Jane • 250 Hatfield, Missy • 50 Hatton, John • 50 Hatton, Susan • 50 & 100

100 Houpt, Debbie • 50 Jamison, Mark • 500 Karem, Kenny • 100

Henninger, Pam •

following volunteers: Knopf, Chris • 250 Landrum, Bill • 100 Lomax, Mike • 500 Mazzoli, Richard • Miller, Margaret • 100 Miller, Woody • 50 & 100 Mock, Otto • 250 Mock, Sheri • 100 Muncy, Brenee • 50 & 100 Nielsen, Sally • 50 Payne, Cynthia • 100 Saunders, Dudley • 250 Tate, Sarah • 50 Unseld, Susie • 50 Webb, Rob •

Our heartfelt thanks to the following sponsors for their generous support of this event:

50 & 100

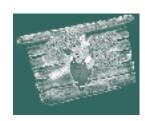
Weidner, Eric • 50

Wright, Dan • 100



Councilwoman Vicki Aubrey Welch







Fairdale





Volunteer News





Natural Areas News

Natural Areas Division Assumes Louisville Loop Responsibilities

Quick Question: A, B, or C - The Louisville Loop is:

A. One of the nicknames of the "Greatest" boxer of all time, Muhammad Ali;

B. After the artificial heart, the most famous medical procedure invented by Dr. William DeVries upon his move to Louisville; or

C. The partially-constructed and largely planned 100+ mile alternative transportation and linear park network planned for the City of Louisville.

If you said A or B, hmm. If you said C you are correct! The LOOP is in various stages of completion, construction, and planning and constructed will connect Louisvillians to each other as never before. The Natural Areas Division is pleased to report that we have recently assumed responsibility for maintenance along certain non-road and non-levee portions of the LOOP, specifically in the western part of the community near the Ohio River.

We have taken ownership of a sweeper truck and hired a new staff person to assist with this effort. As a linear park that will ultimately connect to large regional parks and certain riparian corridors all with significant natural areas features, we look forward to the opportunities this presents to further engage the community in outdoor pursuits.

Welcome Center Now More "Parent-Centered"

Through the gracious donation of AT&T Pioneers we are now able to bring a little bit of nature indoors to our smallest guests. AT&T has donated a bird box outfitted with a camera and flat screen monitor. Children can sit in our modest children's area inside the Welcome Center and glimpse the beginnings

of a bird's life adventure.

We are currently working to install a Children's Nature Explore Area adjacent to the Welcome Center where children can imaginatively use natural materials to bring out their inner artist, musician, archaeologist, or engineer. Check back often as we steadily add more activity areas.

Looking for quality time with your child or grandchild? Well, then cast a line at either Tom Wallace Lake or nearby Waverly Park. Through a partnership with the KY Department of Fish and Wildlife, we are able to offer free usage of fishing poles. To make the experience easy, we also sell live bait and fishing licenses.





Master Plan Update: Paul Yost Multi-use Equestrian Trail

Over this winter, work has progressed on the trail redesign in the Paul Yost Recreation Area. The Forest master plan calls for this area to be a multi-use equestrian/hiking trail head with the main focus on improved equestrian facilities. The reconstructed trail is designed to accommodate both hikers and equestrians of all abilities.

The trail grade is purposefully being altered

through this section of the Forest to 1) minimize horse-user impacts typically associated with steeper grades; and 2) create a trail system within the Forest that can accommodate a wider range of users abilities. Indeed, it will be the first trail area at the Forest of significant length to be rated entirely easy with only infrequent moderate sections.

Construction of this trail system has been somewhat delayed by the wet conditions this winter and is now scheduled come be complete by the end of June 2012. Parking for the new trail system will initially be limited, however, until such time as additional trailhead improvements can be completed.

Detailed construction drawings for the proposed trailhead improvements (including parking, restrooms, and shelters) have been prepared and Metro Parks will be seeking funding for those moving forward.

Master Plan Update: Land Acquisition

It's official! Metro Parks has purchased property where the 2009 JMF Master Plan proposes a new Visitors Center be constructed. Purchase of the Grace property at the corner of Mitchell Hill Road and Holsclaw Hill Road was finalized at the end of 2011 along with two other properties, the Donahue property (just to the left of the entrance to the Paul Yost Recreation Area) and the Richardson Tract (an unimproved parcel of Old Mitchell Hill Road).

While the Richardson Property increases the permanently conserved acreage of the Forest's Tom Wallace area, the Donahue property will allow for improved multi-use trailhead facilities at the Paul Yost Recreation area which includes an improved entrance.

Our first step this spring will be to remove the existing dilapidated structures from both the Grace and Donahue properties and begin working on funding for a detailed site plan and architectural concept drawing for development of the Grace Property into the Forest's signature gateway from the Fairdale community.



Land Management Notes

Bigleaf Magnolia in Jefferson Memorial Forest

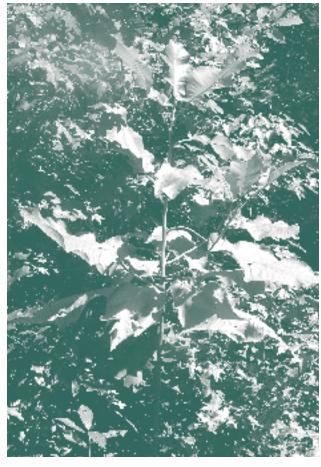
As the Land Steward volunteers were working on Bush Honeysuckle removal the week of March 14, Dann Higgins discovered an interesting leaf from last season's foliage. I recognized it because I have seen it in a couple of other locations in the Forest over the last few years. It was a Magnolia macrophylla, better known by its common name, Bigleaf Magnolia. On showing me the location where it came from, we found a spindly trunk and large fuzzy buds to give us confirmation. In all that makes about 30 individual trunks in four locations that I have noted in Jefferson Forest. This was the first find in the Horine Reservation; the other three locations were in Tom Wallace.

Bigleaf Magnolia is aptly named and is said to have the largest leaves among our native trees with leaves 20-30 inches long. I will qualify that by saying that some species with compound leaves are overall much larger (e.g. Devil's Walkingstick, 36 inches long). Bigleaf Magnolias that I have noted in the

Forest seem to be a recent occurrence because I have found none taller than about 12 ft. or with trunks larger that about two inches in diameter.

It will be interesting to see if these will continue to grow and perhaps flower and produce seed. The native range of Bigleaf Magnolias in Kentucky as noted by most authorities is in the mountainous southeastern counties. I would suspect that the shale and siltstone derived soils in the Knobs replicate the lower pH levels found in the Appalachian soils thus supporting outliers. Other plants on our species list which are found in the Appalachians include Mountain Laurel (Kalmia latifolia) and Sourwood (Oxydendrum arboreum). I would be interested to record other occurrences of these three so keep your eyes open and let me know if you find any.

Bryan Lewis, Land Manager





Plant for the Planet and Coral Ridge Elementary Tree Planting at Tom Wallace

On November 11th, the fourth grade class of Coral Ridge Elementary took part in a tree planting project at Tom Wallace Recreation Area. The day of planting was the culmination project for the school's ECHO program. ECHO stands for Engaging Children Outdoors and is a point of pride for the Forest's environmental education program. The students made the most of the day and planted 200 new native trees to help reforest several open areas. Many of the areas were previously cleared of non-native invasive plants by Forest staff

and Land Steward volunteers over the last two years. We are very grateful to the students and other JMF volunteers who helped get the trees planted. In all, 533 new trees were installed! And, we are extremely thankful to LG&E for providing funding to purchase the trees through a generous Plant for the Planet grant! We are looking forward to an additional planting project this fall in Tom Wallace with funding provided through LG&E Plant for the Planet.



New Employee Profiles



Matt Douthitt Naturalist, Programs

Where were you born?

Born and raised in Louisville, Kentucky.

What is the first experience you remember having in nature?

My earliest memories outside were in my backyard digging miniature creeks and pouring water into them and watching the water react and flow. I also spent a large portion of my childhood climbing in trees.

Why did you choose to pursue a career in Outdoor Recreation and environmental education?

The day before my college graduation (2006) I sat at the Chimney Tops in the Smokey Mountains trying to understand my love of teaching and my love of the outdoors. Only through experience did I realize that the two go hand in hand!

Describe the most adventurous thing you have ever done.

Backpacking the northern half of the Sheltowee Trace in KY, 115 miles solo. Truly an awesome experience and an honest adventure!

What do you like most about working in the Forest?

Nature strips all things away and completely

immerses us. Often there are very few visual reminders of "everyday life". It is undistracted discovery!

What do you want to accomplish in your position at the Forest?

Helping children and adults understand their place in and influence on the natural world. Helping them to see true beauty is found outside, not indoors. I see myself doing this for a long time to come.

I love teaching outside. I love Jefferson Memorial Forest's proximity to most people in Louisville. It breaks the mindset that you have to go far to get away.

Any hobbies?

Sailing, bookmaking, and carpentry are the most prominent.

Person you most admire and why?

Without a doubt, my father. I would not be who I am and where I am without his influence and wisdom.

What is something people would find surprising about you?

In high-school I worked at a western wear store in Mall St Matthews shaping cowboy hats.



Josh Wysor Horticulture Park Worker, Land Management

Where were you born?

I am a native of Appalachia, born five miles outside Trout Dale in the smallest incorporated town in Grayson County, Virginia.

What is the first experience you remember having in nature?

At age three, I was shown an endangered pink lady slipper that grew near my mountain home by my mother Susan Wysor. Or, herding goats with my border collie Lee Lee, who went for help when I got ensnared in a patch of round-leaf greenbriar.

What do you like most about working in the Natural Areas Division?

The endless opportunities to be in the rich diversity of Jefferson County's unique Knobs regions as an advocate for rare and struggling native species of plants and animals.

What do you want to accomplish in your position?

I am currently solidifying my technical expertise under some of the most talented equipment operators in the city; at the same time working on a comprehensive database of the flora of Jefferson County that will update Henry McMurtrie's 1819 "Florula Louisvillensis" and Charles Wilkins Short's Supplementary Plant Catalogs.

Any hobbies?

Botany, naturalism, writing.

Person you most admire and why?

Patricia Haragan, who is an inspiring and talented botanist and author who has taught me more botany in Kentucky than any others combined. She is kind, selfless and has a contagious love of nature that never fails to bring a smile.

What is something people would find surprising about you?

I was born in a log cabin to parents who lived in a teepee while building our rustic post and beam home. I followed the same path to Kentucky as Daniel Boone when I moved to Louisville in 2004, September.





Micah Martin Park Worker II, Louisville Loop

Where were you born? Louisville, Kentucky.

What is the first experience you remember having in nature?

I grew up hunting and fishing with my father and grandfather.

What do you like most about working in the Natural Areas Division?

It gives me the opportunity to use my degree in wildlife management.

What do you want to accomplish in your position?

To build upon my knowledge base to further my career.

Any hobbies?

Hunting, fishing, hiking, kayaking and anything else nature related.

Person you most admire and why?

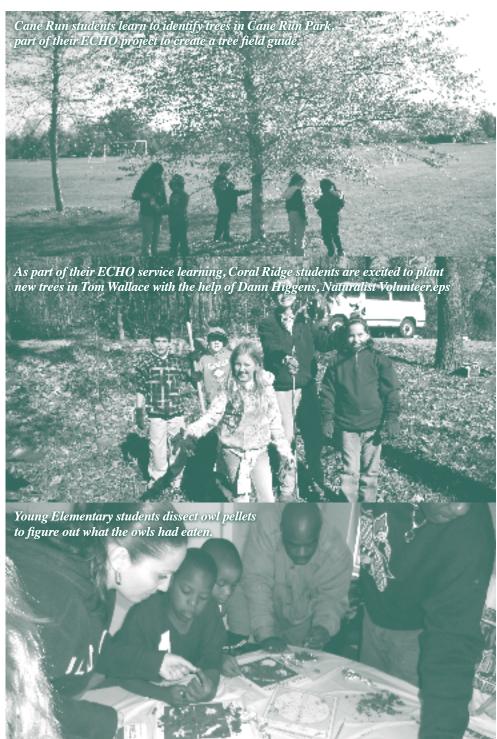
Aldo Leopold, the father of wildlife management, who developed the idea of applying one's knowledge of animals and plants in a manner that strikes a balance between the needs of the people and the needs of the animals in a way that promotes long-term sustainable use of resources.

What is something people would find surprising about you?

I have four children, two boys and two girls and have been married for eighteen years.

Louisville ECHO

Metro Parks' Louisville ECHO (Louisville is Engaging Children Outdoors) initiative is in its fourth year and has allowed nearly 1,000 students to explore the outdoors since its inception. Currently the program serves fourth-grade students from five elementary schools, providing multiple field experiences through funding from the U.S. Forest Service, Toyota Motor Manufacturing of Kentucky, and Dawn Foods, Inc. The following photos showcase some of the activities students engage in on their field investigations.





Sense of Place: The Natural Areas of Jefferson County

Sense of Place is a series of enrichment evenings and Saturday explorations. Each Sense of Place program has 2 components. A Free lecture by a community speaker on the scheduled topic held at the Fairdale Public Library, held on the second Wednesday of each month. This component is free but registration is required to guarantee you a spot. You can register by calling 502/368-5404 or emailing forest@louisvilleky.gov.

The second component is the Exploration on the Saturday following the lecture. The Exploration takes place in various locations throughout the Natural Areas of Jefferson County. It is hosted by the Naturalists of Jefferson Memorial Forest. The Exploration provides participants the opportunity to apply the knowledge gained from the lecture to the natural world through hikes, hands-on activities, and journaling. There is a \$15 fee for each Exploration to cover the cost of materials. However, if you register for all twelve Explorations, you will save \$5 per program. You will also receive a Nature Journal to record information you want to remember, and your observations of the natural world.

#1 EARTH'S PLACE AMONG THE PLANETS IN OUR SOLAR SYSTEM

LECTURE

Wednesday, April 11, 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Speaker Prof. Tim Dowling, Director of the Atmospheric Science Program at the University of Louisville is an expert on planetary atmospheres. His lecture places Earth in the perspective of the entire Solar System. For the past half century, this out-of-the-box, comparative planetology approach has allowed scientists to identify and begin to understand the processes that make our home planet habitable.

EXPLORATION

Saturday, April 14, 7:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m.

Location: Horine Reservation, Jefferson Memorial Forest.

Leaders: Louisville Astronomical Society

#2 THE ORIGIN OF THE OHIO RIVER AND THE KNOBS

LECTURE

Wednesday, May 9, 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Speaker William Andrews works for the Kentucky Geological Survey. Mr. Andrews manages the programs and activities of the Geologic Mapping Section. He enjoys sharing how geology has impacted human history and society. The Knobs is a long, narrow region shaped like an irregular horseshoe, with both ends touching the Ohio River. Andrews will discuss how these geological formations came to be and the impact they had on how Louisville developed.

EXPLORATION

Saturday, May 12, 9 am to 12 p.m.

Location: Falls of the Ohio Leaders: JMF Naturalists

#3 THE WATER THROUGH JEFFERSON COUNTY

LECTURE

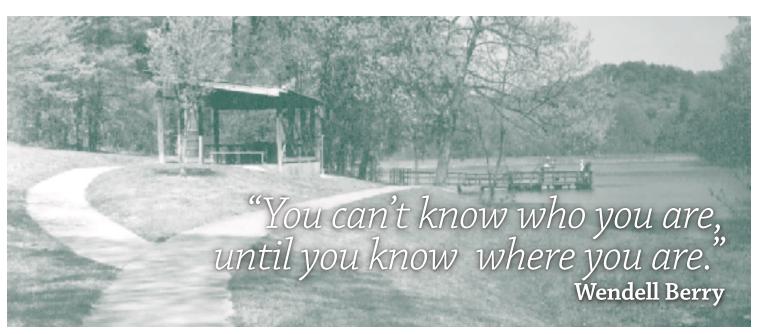
Wednesday, June 13, 14, 7 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Sarah Wolff is a proud native Kentuckian who has been in love with Louisville for over 14 years. Having moved here to study Urban Forest and Stream Ecology at U of L, she now works for Olmsted Park Conservancy. She currently serves on the Steering Committee for the Salt River Watershed Watch, and as President of Beargrass Creek Alliance, a newly formed local chapter of Kentucky Waterways Alliance. She will talk about the history of our watersheds, and some of the modern day issues and solutions.

EXPLORATION

Saturday, June 16, 9 am to 12 p.m.

This is a special Exploration that will include a kayak trip up Beargrass Creek from the Ohio River. Meets in front of the Louisville Boat House at 1389 River Road 40207.





Sense of Place: The Natural Areas of Jefferson County



down, by emailing <u>forest@louisvilleky.gov</u> with the request "subscribe to newsletter." Include your name and the mailing address where you received this issue, and you will then only

receive electronic copies of future newsletters.

Public Program Calendar: April Through June

The Forest offers programs for all ages. For more information visit our website at <u>memorialforest.com</u> or call the Welcome Center at 502/368-5404. Our staff will be happy to help make reservations, give directions to the program location, or provide a complete schedule of programs throughout the year. For all programs, please wear close-toed walking shoes and dress for the weather.

Reservations are required in advance. The Forest reserves the right to cancel, change or postpone program dates and venues, due to insufficient registration, conditions or weather. In such cases rain checks will be provided.

OUTDOOR SKILLS

ORIENTEERING II

Saturday, April 7, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Know the basics, but want to learn more about orienteering? This program delves into the finer points of orienteering and includes a challenge course to practice your skills. This in-field set of exercises is truly a hands-on learning experience. Ages 12 and up. Program meets in the Horine Reservation. Fee: \$10/person

MOTHER'S DAY WITH MOTHER EARTH Sunday, May 13, 12 to 3 p.m.

Celebrate your Mom with Mother Nature! This special day is all about family, fun, and enjoying the outdoors! Take a short, scenic wildflower and birding hike, followed by a catered picnic on the Manor House lawn. Pictures of you and your mom will be taken and printed on site, with an area for decorating a picture frame with natural materials. This relaxing day is meant for moms of all ages.

Fee: \$25 per Mom. Includes box lunch for Mom and child, and all materials for picture and frame. \$10 for each additional family member. One framed picture per family.

METRO PARKS FISHING DERBY/ NATIONAL TRAIL DAY AT TOM WALLACE LAKE

Saturday, June 2, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Join us for the biggest kid's fishing event ever! Poles, hooks, and bait will be provided. Fishing instructors will be there to help you learn how to bait and cast your line. There will be a variety of contests you can win with the fish you catch. Each child will receive a free picture with the first fish they catch. Caught your limit? Take your kids on a guided hike of a Forest trail. Food vendors will be there as well. This event is for children 17 and under but parents and guardians are encouraged to come support their child. Fee: Free

THE GREAT AMERICAN CAMP OUT

Saturday, June 23, 7 p.m. to Sunday, June 24, 11 a.m.

Since 2005, thousands of people from across the nation have come together the fourth Saturday of June to participate in the Great American Backyard Campout in support of Great Outdoors Month. The Campout not only raises awareness of the benefits of camping as a way to connect people with nature, but it also reinforces National Wildlife Federation's Be Out There campaign. This event is an easy way for friends, families and children to connect with nature, sleep under the stars and create memories of outdoor experiences. Jefferson Memorial Forest wants to host the biggest campout ever! We'll provide the campfire, s'mores, night hikes, and activities, you provide your breakfast and a tent. If you wish to bring your dinner to cook over the open fire, please arrive at 5:30 p.m.. In the morning, you will have the day to explore the Forest, meet the animals in the Environmental Education Center, or go fishing at Tom Wallace with free fishing poles provided at the Welcome Center. Fee: \$25 per family up to 4; \$5 per additional family member. \$15 per platform tent rental.



Friday, April 13, 7 to 8:30 p.m. No Howl program for May Friday, June 15, 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Come out to the Forest for an evening romp through the woods with your dog! Forest staff will lead owners and their pooches on a hike through the woods. Keep in mind that your dog will be around other dogs and people. Non-retractable leashes and good behavior are required. As a courtesy to other dogs, please make sure your pet is up to date on their vaccinations. Meets in the Horine Reservation. Fee: \$6/dog





Also featuring

HOG OPERATION



23 STRING BAND



NEW TOWN



For more information go to memorialforest.com or call 502.368.5404.

FREE EVENT! PARKING \$10

SATURDAY MAY 19 10° AM - 7 PM

District 13 Councilwoman Vicki Welch

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Greg Fischer, Mayor Louisville Metro Council



Summer Camp at the Forest June 4 through July 27 New camps, new activities and a new shuttle service!

During winter, Forest education staff has been hard at work coming up with new exciting activities for our camps, as well as two entirely new camps! Our Forest Adventures will provide children - ages 4 to 15 - a total immersion experience in the natural world. Camps allow children to take on the roles of naturalist, scientist and explorer as they discover new things about the Forest and the creatures inhabiting it. By combining educational activities and learning experiences with traditional summer camp fun, your child will have an adventure to remember. Activities will include nature studies, crafts, experiments, games, journaling, hikes and contact with the Forest's education animals.

Each session will run for one week, and each child will receive a Forest water bottle. This year we are offering a new shuttle service from Joe Creason Park, across from the Louisville Zoo, to all but one of the camp sessions. For camp prices and registration forms, please visit memorialforest.com or call the Welcome Center at 502/368-5404.

